

Emydoidea blandingii (Blanding's Turtle)

Priority 1 Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN)

Class: *Reptilia* (Reptiles)

Order: *Testudines* (Turtles And Tortoises)

Family: *Emydidae* (Pond Turtles)

General comments:

~350% increase in # of wetlands (~55 to ~250); total population=1-2,000?; new SWH safety net; severe demographic concerns & threats remain; SVP protection; USFWS considering listing New England population as a "Distinct Population Segment" and thus federally Threatened

Species Conservation Range Maps for Blanding's Turtle:

Town Map: [Emydoidea blandingii Towns.pdf](#)

Subwatershed Map: [Emydoidea blandingii_HUC12.pdf](#)

SGCN Priority Ranking - Designation Criteria:

Risk of Extirpation:

Maine Status: **Endangered**

IUCN Red List Status: **Endangered**

State Special Concern or NMFS Species of Concern: NA

Recent Significant Declines: NA

Regional Endemic: NA

High Regional Conservation Priority:

Northeast Endangered Species and Wildlife Diversity Technical Committee:

Risk: Yes, Data: Yes, Area: Yes, Spec: Yes, Warrant Listing: Yes, Total Categories with "Yes": 5

Northeast Partners In Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (NEPARC):

Regional Responsibility: < 50 % US Distribution, Concern: >= 75% of States Listed in WAP

High Climate Change Vulnerability: NA

Understudied rare taxa: NA

Historical: NA

Culturally Significant: NA

Habitats Assigned to Blanding's Turtle:

Formation Name Agricultural

Macrogroup Name Agricultural

Habitat System Name: Pasture-Hay **Notes:** *secondary*

Formation Name Developed

Macrogroup Name Extractive

Habitat System Name: Quarries-Pits-Stripmines **Notes:** *secondary as nesting habitat*

Formation Name Freshwater Aquatic

Macrogroup Name Lakes and Ponds

Habitat System Name: Dystrophic **Notes:** *secondary but may be important where wetlands are shallow and have significant emergent herbaceous and/or woody vegetation component*

Habitat System Name: Eutrophic **Notes:** *secondary but may be important where wetlands are shallow and have significant emergent herbaceous and/or woody vegetation component*

Habitat System Name: Mesotrophic or Intermediate **Notes:** *secondary*

Habitat System Name: Vernal Pool ****Primary Habitat**** **Notes:** *primary*

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Formation Name	Freshwater Aquatic
Macrogroup Name	Rivers and Streams
Habitat System Name:	Headwaters and Creeks Notes: <i>secondary but may be important where flow is slow and there is significant emergent herbaceous and woody vegetation</i>
Formation Name	Freshwater Marsh
Macrogroup Name	Coastal Plain Pond
Habitat System Name:	Northern Atlantic Coastal Plain Pond Notes: <i>secondary but may be important where emergent herbaceous and woody vegetation is abundant</i>
Macrogroup Name	Emergent Marsh
Habitat System Name:	Laurentian-Acadian Freshwater Marsh **Primary Habitat** Notes: <i>primary</i>
Macrogroup Name	Modified-Managed Marsh
Habitat System Name:	Modified-Managed Marsh Notes: <i>secondary but may be important where emergent herbaceous and woody vegetation is abundant</i>
Macrogroup Name	Wet Meadow-Shrub Marsh
Habitat System Name:	Introduced Wetland and Riparian Vegetation **Primary Habitat** Notes: <i>primary</i>
Habitat System Name:	Laurentian-Acadian Wet Meadow-Shrub Swamp **Primary Habitat** Notes: <i>primary</i>
Formation Name	Grassland & Shrubland
Macrogroup Name	Outcrop & Summit Scrub
Habitat System Name:	Northern Appalachian-Acadian Rocky Heath Outcrop Notes: <i>secondary as nesting habitat</i>
Macrogroup Name	Ruderal Shrubland & Grassland
Habitat System Name:	Introduced Shrubland Notes: <i>secondary</i>
Habitat System Name:	Powerline Right-of-Way Notes: <i>secondary as nesting habitat</i>
Habitat System Name:	Ruderal Upland - Old Field Notes: <i>secondary</i>
Formation Name	Northeastern Upland Forest
Macrogroup Name	Central Oak-Pine
Habitat System Name:	Central Appalachian Dry Oak-Pine Forest Notes: <i>secondary</i>
Habitat System Name:	Central Appalachian Pine-Oak Rocky Woodland Notes: <i>secondary</i>
Habitat System Name:	North Atlantic Coastal Plain Hardwood Forest Notes: <i>secondary</i>
Habitat System Name:	Northeastern Interior Pine Barrens Notes: <i>secondary</i>
Macrogroup Name	Exotic Upland Forest
Habitat System Name:	Introduced Upland Vegetation - Tree Notes: <i>secondary</i>
Macrogroup Name	Northern Hardwood & Conifer
Habitat System Name:	Appalachian (Hemlock)-Northern Hardwood Forest Notes: <i>secondary</i>
Habitat System Name:	Northeastern Coastal and Interior Pine-Oak Forest Notes: <i>secondary</i>
Macrogroup Name	Plantation and Ruderal Forest
Habitat System Name:	Managed Tree Plantation Notes: <i>secondary</i>
Habitat System Name:	Ruderal Forest - Northern and Central Hardwood and Conifer Notes: <i>secondary</i>
Formation Name	Northeastern Wetland Forest
Macrogroup Name	Central Hardwood Swamp
Habitat System Name:	North-Central Interior Wet Flatwoods Notes: <i>secondary</i>

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Stressor Priority Level based on Severity and Actionability		Moderate Severity	High Severity
	Highly Actionable	Medium-High	High
	Moderately Actionable	Medium	Medium-High
	Actionable with Difficulty	Low	Low

IUCN Level 1 Threat **Biological Resource Use****IUCN Level 2 Threat:** Logging and Wood Harvesting**Severity:** Moderate Severity **Actionability:** Highly actionable**Notes:** Forestry operations could negatively effect populations by direct mortality from skidders etc during spring/summer or by altering forested wetland habitat**IUCN Level 1 Threat** **Residential and Commercial Development****IUCN Level 2 Threat:** Commercial and Industrial Areas**Severity:** Severe **Actionability:** Moderately actionable**Notes:** Habitat loss, degradation, and fragmentation from development and increased human activity**IUCN Level 2 Threat:** Housing and Urban Areas**Severity:** Severe **Actionability:** Moderately actionable**Notes:** Habitat loss, degradation, and fragmentation from development and increased human activity**IUCN Level 1 Threat** **Transportation and Service Corridors****IUCN Level 2 Threat:** Roads and Railroads**Severity:** Severe **Actionability:** Moderately actionable**Notes:** Mortality from vehicle collisions on roads is major threat and roads also contribute to the loss, degradation, and fragmentation of habitat**IUCN Level 1 Threat** **Biological Resource Use****IUCN Level 2 Threat:** Fishing and Harvesting of Aquatic Resources**Severity:** Moderate Severity **Actionability:** Moderately actionable**Notes:** Poaching and incidental collection**IUCN Level 1 Threat** **Energy Production and Mining****IUCN Level 2 Threat:** Mining and Quarrying**Severity:** Moderate Severity **Actionability:** Moderately actionable**Notes:** Development and operation of quarries and gravel can contribute to habitat loss, degradation, and fragmentation**IUCN Level 1 Threat** **Human Intrusions and Disturbance****IUCN Level 2 Threat:** Recreational Activities**Severity:** Moderate Severity **Actionability:** Moderately actionable**Notes:** Direct mortality from off-road vehicles is a threat as well as impacts to habitat, particularly nesting habitat

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IUCN Level 1 Threat **Invasive and Other Problematic Species, Genes and Diseases**

IUCN Level 2 Threat: Invasive Non-native-Alien Species-Diseases

Severity: Moderate Severity

Actionability: Moderately actionable

Notes: Invasive wetland plants that dominate or form monocultures

IUCN Level 1 Threat **Climate Change and Severe Weather**

IUCN Level 2 Threat: Habitat Shifting or Alteration

Severity: Moderate Severity

Actionability: Actionable with difficulty

Notes: Climate change for species occupying narrow latitudinal band

Species Level Conservation Actions Assigned to Blanding's Turtle:

**Only species specific conservation actions that address high (red) or medium-high (orange) priority stressors are summarized here.*

Conservation Action	Category: Species Management	Biological Priority: high	Type: on-going
Continue the cautionary road crossing signage program, and expand the number of locations with signs as additional road crossing hotspots are identified.			

Stressor(s) Addressed By This Conservation Action

Roads and Railroads

Conservation Action	Category: Research	Biological Priority: critical	Type: on-going
Identify potential road crossing hotspots using GIS and monitor mortality at those locations with road surveys to prioritize the most problematic road segments for mitigation measures such as cautionary signage, exclusionary fencing, and under-road p			

Stressor(s) Addressed By This Conservation Action

Roads and Railroads

Conservation Action	Category: Species Management	Biological Priority: critical	Type: new
Install road crossing structures consisting of under-road passageways and guidance fencing where high-mortality road segments bisect habitat that hosts high priority populations			

Stressor(s) Addressed By This Conservation Action

Roads and Railroads

Conservation Action	Category: Public Outreach	Biological Priority: high	Type: on-going
Continue to build public awareness of risks posed by roadways with seasonally appropriate press release that also warns motorists to be on the lookout for turtles during spring/early summer.			

Stressor(s) Addressed By This Conservation Action

Roads and Railroads

Conservation Action	Category: Habitat Management	Biological Priority: high	Type: new
Manage and where necessary create nesting habitat to improve viability of high-priority Blanding's turtle populations			

Stressor(s) Addressed By This Conservation Action

Commercial and Industrial Areas

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Conservation Action	Category: Habitat Management	Biological Priority: high	Type: new
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Research and coordinate the development of a publically available Potential Vernal Pool map product that covers the entire State, or at least all organized townships

Stressor(s) Addressed By This Conservation Action

Commercial and Industrial Areas

Conservation Action	Category: Policy	Biological Priority: moderate	Type: on-going
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Cooperate with University of Maine and the Maine Department of Environmental Protection to research and implement a voluntary Special Area Management Program (SAMP) by towns that want greater flexibility in the implementation of

Stressor(s) Addressed By This Conservation Action

Commercial and Industrial Areas

Guild Level Conservation Actions:

This Species is currently not attributed to a guild.

Broad Taxonomic Group Conservation Actions:

Additional relevant conservation actions for this species are assigned within broader taxonomic groups in Maine's 2015 Wildlife Action Plan: Element 4, Table 4-1.

Habitat Based Conservation Actions:

Additional conservation actions that may benefit habitat(s) associated with this species can be found in Maine's 2015 Wildlife Action Plan: Element 4, Table 4-15. Click on the Habitat Grouping of interest to launch a habitat based report summarizing relevant conservation actions and associated SGCN.

The Wildlife Action Plan was developed through a lengthy participatory process with state agencies, targeted conservation partners, and the general public. The Plan is non-regulatory. The species, stressors, and voluntary conservation actions identified in the Plan complement, but do not replace, existing work programs and priorities by state agencies and partners.